

MEMORANDUM SUBMITTED BY LOS ANGELES DISTRICT ON  
PLANS AND ESTIMATES FOR CONTROL OF MEXICAN BORDER

I.

BACKGROUND

It might be well at the outset to furnish some background information. While the illegal entry of Mexican Nationals has been a problem for many years, the annual apprehensions before World War II were less than 4000. Following the termination of World War II, there began a mass migration of Mexican Nationals into the United States. The economic situation in Mexico forced thousands of starving Mexicans to leave their homes in Mexico to seek work in the United States. Apprehensions began to pyramid from 38,808 in 1946 to 92,480 in 1949; and from 230,165 in 1950 to the astronomical figure of 601,196 in 1953. Notwithstanding this steady rise in apprehensions, the Border Patrol officer personnel was not proportionately increased. The District authorized Border Patrol force as of July 1, 1954 was 240 as compared with 202 on June 21, 1949.

The magnitude of the problem, however, was recognized, and from time to time special measures were undertaken within existing budgetary limitations to meet it. Details of Border Patrol Inspectors from other districts, ranging from 25 to 50 officers, for limited periods of time, were authorized and directed during the years 1950, 1951, 1952, and 1953. In 1951, realizing the futility of merely returning the apprehended "wetbacks" across the border, an operation was commenced to "airlift" apprehended aliens, not residents of Baja California, to the interior of Mexico: Guadalajara, San Luis Potosi, and other places. The operation was put into effect in June of 1951 and continued through April 19, 1952, when it was discontinued because of lack of funds. It was resumed on a limited basis June 13, 1952 through July 23, when it was again discontinued because of insufficient funds. 24,007 aliens were airlifted to the interior of Mexico during the period of time it was in operation. Again in September of 1952, after appropriate negotiations with the Mexican authorities, a plan was conceived to return apprehended "wetbacks", nonresidents of Baja California, to the interior of Mexico by train. There were 5,251 aliens returned to Mexico but when Mexico withdrew military guards from the trains after four months, it had to be discontinued. The airlift operation was limited to the El Centro Sector in this District and apprehensions in that sector dropped from 1000 to 1500 a day at the beginning of the operation to fewer than 300 a day at the end. While the projects were in operation, reasonable control of the "wetback" situation on the line was achieved, but as soon as the projects were abandoned, the aliens began returning again in the same and even greater numbers. In 1953, a survey of the "wetback" situation was undertaken by the Attorney General in person. Various solutions were advanced, studied, and analyzed.

II.

NUMBER OF OFFICERS AND AMOUNT OF EQUIPMENT NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN COMPLETE CONTROL OF THE WETBACK PROBLEM IN THIS DISTRICT

The answer to this question is dependent upon various premises and the objectives to be accomplished. Because of the scope and far-reaching effect of any proposals, there are set forth three plans of operation:



#### PLAN NO. 1

The objective of this plan is to seal the border area to the highest extent possible and make provisions for the apprehension of those who may infiltrate. It can be carried into effect only with adequate funds and manpower. A report on this plan was submitted under date of September 18, 1953, and for your immediate consideration a copy of that report is attached. It contemplates the construction of 24.4 miles of new fencing and 5.6 miles of reconstructed fencing, and provides for the erection and maintenance of 25 towers equipped with two-way radio facilities and searchlights. The manpower needed to carry out this proposal is estimated to be 641 Patrol Inspectors, 6 Airplane Pilots, and 56 auxiliary personnel, such as, Engineering Aides, Clerk-Stenographers, General Mechanics, etc., as listed on Page 6 of the aforementioned attached report. The additional equipment needed to support the increased personnel is listed on Page 6 of the aforementioned attached report. The estimated cost of such equipment is \$490,800.00. Our present authorized Border Patrol force is 238 Patrol Inspectors, 2 Airplane Pilots, and 31 auxiliary personnel. The estimated cost of the additional personnel on the yearly basis is \$2,246,000.00. According to a survey made by the Los Angeles Engineering Division of the Department of the Army, the construction of the fence, such as herein proposed, is estimated at \$2,183,000.00. The estimated cost per tower, including cost of searchlight, heater, motor generator standby, and in desert locations, mechanical cooling, is \$18,000, making a total estimated cost of \$450,000. No provision has been made in this plan for flood-lighting the fence area, as it is believed impractical, being susceptible to sabotage.

#### PLAN NO. 2

This plan assumes that budgetary restrictions and other considerations will not make possible the adoption of Plan No. 1. It is designed, however, to give a fairly reasonable control of the line and to provide for adequate road blocks and personnel for mop-up operations.

This plan envisages a more realistic approach to the "wetback" problem. It provides for a reasonably effective control of the border area and is more in keeping with the principles of economy enunciated in 1953 by the Director of the Bureau of the Budget. Most, if not all, of the additional officer personnel required may be made available through a reallocation of the Border Patrol force within the entire Service. It provides for a strong line watch with "back-up" stations. The "mopping-up" in areas outside the Border Patrol activities can be accomplished by use of Investigator personnel. Provision is made for Border Patrol personnel to combat organized smuggling which has always been a major problem in this District. A tighter line watch and adequate back-up stations will be a challenge to the inveterate smugglers. The price for smuggling will increase, but as long as they will be able to find aliens with sufficient funds they will continue to engage in their trade and attempt to devise and adopt means of evading detection. They will resort to any and all means of accomplishing their ends. Smuggling by airplane will undoubtedly increase.



The plan calls for 201 additional Patrol Inspectors and 17 additional auxiliary personnel. Provision is made for five new stations; three, at Tecate, Pine Valley and Jacumba, to strengthen the line watch, and two, at Bakersfield and Ventura. The latter two stations are necessary for apprehending those aliens who succeed in piercing the first and second lines of defense and who are destined for the agricultural and industrial areas in the San Francisco District. Bakersfield and Ventura are the principal funneling points for the San Joaquin Valley and San Francisco area.

The estimated yearly salary cost of the 201 additional Patrol Inspectors and the 17 additional auxiliary personnel on the basis of the five-day week, plus night differential and holiday pay, is \$1,051,493.00. The following additional equipment, with the estimated cost of \$220,650.00 will be required to satisfy this additional personnel:

2 airplanes	\$16,000.00
40 jeeps	72,000.00
8 sedans	13,600.00
19 panel trucks	34,200.00
24 typewriters	4,200.00
6 desks and chairs	900.00
200 handcuffs	2,000.00
200 flashlights	200.00
225 revolvers	11,250.00
80 binoculars	7,200.00
2 horse trailers	2,600.00
1 yr. supply ammunition	25,000.00
63 mobile 2-way FM radio sets	31,500.00
	<u>\$220,650.00</u>

The personnel will be deployed by Sectors in the following manner. It will, of course, be subject to change as new conditions and crises arise. Also, bearing in mind that there are peak and slack seasons throughout the year for illegal entries, the force can be so shifted to permit mopping up in otherwise untouched areas through the entire State of California.

#### CHULA VISTA SECTOR

##### Chula Vista Station

- 4 Supervisors (above crew or shift leaders)
- 3 Airplane pilots
- 2 Radio technicians
- 4 Radio operators
- 4 Clerk-stenos
- 4 Fence repairmen
- 1 Janitor
- 1 Laborer
- 5 Auto mechanics



8 Officers (undercover and anti-smuggling investigations)  
57 Officers (line watch, including jeep and horse patrol)  
12 Officers (check of ranches, industry and trades)  
16 Officers (trains, buses, airports, etc.)  
6 Officers (transportation of aliens)  
127

El Cajon Station

1 Officer in Charge  
4 Officers (check of ranches, industry and trades)  
4 Officers (line watch and checking trails and roads)  
9

Tecate Station

6 Officers (line watch and checking trails and roads)

Pine Valley Station

6 Officers (line watch, trails and roads)

Jacumba Station

6 Officers (line watch and trails and roads)

Oceanside Station

1 Officer in Charge  
14 Officers (highway check)  
2 Officers (checking ranches, industry and trades)  
17

Temecula Station

1 Officer in Charge  
9 Officers (highway check)  
2 Officers (ranch check)  
12

Aguanga Station

6 Officers (Patrol of highways and check of trails and roads)

Colton Station

1 Officer in Charge  
20 Officers (train check)  
2 Officers (ranch, industry and trades)  
23



Bakersfield Station

1 Officer in Charge  
9 Officers (check of ranches, industry, trades, trains, buses, etc.)  
10

Ventura Station

4 Officers (check of ranches, industry, trades, trains, buses, etc.)

Sector totals

Officers	202
Auxiliary personnel	24
	<u>226</u>

EL CENTRO SECTOR

El Centro Station

4 Supervisors (above crew or shift leaders)  
3 Airplane pilots  
2 Radio technicians  
4 Radio operators  
4 Clerk-stenos  
2 Fence repairmen  
1 Janitor  
1 Laborer  
6 Auto mechanics  
4 Officers (undercover - anti-smuggling investigations)  
18 Officers (check of ranches, industry and trades, bus depots, etc.)  
6 Officers (transportation and processing aliens)  
55

Calexico Station

1 Officer in Charge  
2 Assistant Officers in Charge  
76 Officers (line and canal watch, jeep patrol and tower watch)  
79

Yuma Station

1 Officer in Charge  
2 Assistant Officers in Charge  
30 Officers (line and river watch and jeep patrol of roads, trails, desert)  
30 Officers (ranch, industry and trades, depots and highway check)  
5 Officers (transportation and processing aliens)  
68

Brawley Station

1 Officer in Charge  
17 Officers (check of highways, trains)  
12 Officers (patrol of trails and desert, check ranches, industry and trades)  
30



Indio Station

1 Officer in Charge  
 10 Officers (check trains, buses, and back roads)  
 4 Officers (desert and mountain trail check and patrol)  
15

Blythe Station

1 Officer in Charge  
 6 Officers (patrol and check of trails and roads along Colorado River)  
 6 Officers (check of ranches, industry and trades, depots, etc.)  
13

El Centro Sector Totals

Officers 237  
 Auxiliary personnel 23  
260

Chula Vista Sector Totals

Officers 202  
 Auxiliary personnel 24  
226

Both Sectors

Officers 439  
 Auxiliary personnel 47  
486

PLAN NO. 3

This is identical with the one proposed in our report on Budget Estimates for the Fiscal Year 1956. It is premised on previously announced budgetary limitations. It is not based on doing a first-class job but is one compelled because of monetary restrictions. To be at all effective, it must be implemented by:

- (1) A vigorous prosecution program as a deterrent to illegal entries and organized smuggling;
- (2) A step up in formal deportation proceedings;
- (3) A liberal Agricultural Labor Recruitment program; and,
- (4) Removal of apprehended "wetbacks" by buslift or otherwise to the interior of Mexico.

The plan is not as effective as proposals No. 1 and 2, but is given as a minimum if budgetary conditions compel abandonment of those plans. Under this plan, 100 additional Patrol Inspectors and 10 auxiliary personnel over and above our authorized force of ~~240~~ Patrol Inspectors and 30 auxiliary personnel are required. They will be used principally to strengthen the line watch and the back-up stations. They will be deployed proportionately in accordance with the deployment set out in Plan No. 2, except that we would be unable to man the Bakersfield and Ventura back-up stations. It is believed that even under this plan, a fence of the kind described under Item IV should be constructed along the 16 3/4 miles east and west of the



Port of San Ysidro. The following additional equipment, with estimated cost of \$124,950.00 will be required to service the additional personnel.

2 airplanes	\$16,000.00
20 jeeps	36,000.00
4 sedans	6,800.00
10 panel trucks	18,000.00
12 typewriters	2,100.00
3 desks	450.00
100 handcuffs	1,000.00
100 flashlights	100.00
110 revolvers	5,500.00
30 binoculars	2,700.00
1 horse trailer	1,300.00
1 yr. supply ammunition	15,000.00
40 mobile 2-way FM radios	20,000.00
	<u>\$124,950.00</u>

The estimated cost of the additional 100 Patrol Inspector and 10 auxiliary personnel positions on a yearly basis, plus night differential and holiday pay, is \$526,000.00.

### III.

#### EFFECTIVENESS OF ROAD BLOCK OPERATIONS IN PREVENTING ILLEGAL ENTRIES ACROSS THE LAND BOUNDARIES.

No matter how many officers are committed to a "line watch", road block operations are necessary on the premise that complete control of the line cannot be accomplished. Aliens will continue to infiltrate, particularly at night. Road blocks are also effective in the apprehension of smugglers and transporters of aliens in violations of Sections 273 and 274 of the Immigration and Nationality Act. For years a road block has been openly maintained at Oceanside, California, and yet, the majority of our commercial smuggling apprehensions have occurred there. For example, this week three smuggled aliens were apprehended at this point concealed in a hidden compartment in an automobile.

As offsprings of the road block operations are the desert patrols and mountain trail checking, the checking of buses and freight trains, and the checking of passenger depots, etc. The freight train checking has always posed a real problem - even now, when a fairly reasonable control of the line has been achieved. These freight trains are operated principally by the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe lines. The Southern Pacific presents the more difficult situation. It has one line entering from the east at Yuma, Arizona and continuing west through Niland and then north through Indio with Los Angeles as its destination. It operates on a single track, the greater portion of the distance, and its operating schedules are such that if the freight trains were to be stopped indiscriminately it would result in grave consequences to the railroad company. Consequently, it is only possible to check these freight trains at certain designated spots. Thousands of aliens have used and are continuing to use these freight trains as a means of piercing our road block defense and by experience have devised and adopted ingenious methods to avoid apprehension.



They will alight from the freight trains before approaching a known checking spot, walk around and then board the train at a point farther north. Some of them conceal themselves in sealed cars, tanks, and in beet gondolas. As an illustration, twenty-one aliens were apprehended on July 21, 1954 in Central California. All of them stated they had entered illegally in the El Centro area the weekend of July 17th and made their way north on freight trains operated by the Southern Pacific. They accomplished this, even though we had what we believed to be a fairly good check on all freight trains operating during that weekend at two places along the lines; namely, Indio and Colton, California. As a result of this intelligence, steps have been taken to strengthen the freight train checking, and provision has also been made to keep some of the freight trains under observation by plane during the daylight hours and communicating with the checking points if the presence of aliens is observed.

Road block crews are also used for mopping up purposes in the immediate vicinity of the border area by engaging in periodic ranch and industry checking.

#### IV.

#### EFFECTIVENESS OF LINE OPERATIONS IN PREVENTING ILLEGAL ENTRY OF ALIENS

The special Border Patrol operation has confirmed what was already established; namely, that it is not practical or possible to completely seal the land border no matter how many officers are employed. It is, however, conceded that by concentrating a large force on the line patrol, implemented by increased airplane flights and jeep patrols, many aliens are prevented from attempting to enter illegally during the daylight hours. Its effectiveness, however, is greatly diminished at night and during inclement weather when most illegal entries and organized commercial smuggling occur. Consequently, road blocks located at strategic points behind the line must be maintained no matter how strong the line watch may be.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of any line watch is contingent upon many other factors, such as, the economic situation in both the United States and Mexico, the need for farm labor in this country, the potential of line jumpers immediately across the border, etc. It is futile to return apprehended aliens across the border, as they present a continuous challenge. Therefore, it is necessary that any line watch be implemented by a program of removing the apprehended "wetbacks" from the border area.

For some 16 3/4 miles east and west of the Port of San Ysidro there are no natural barriers, and, consequently, this offers an open invitation to illegal crossings. There is a large concentration of unemployed aliens in the Tijuana area who pose a constant problem. Hundreds of them seek employment in the United States and return to their homes across the line at night. They enter during the early dark hours of the morning, when there is the least chance of their apprehension, and by daylight hours are at places where it is not possible to detect them by jeep patrol or airplane. It is believed that the patrol of the line, at least in that area, can be made more effective if a fence of the kind recommended by the Army Engineers is constructed. The details are set out in the recommended plans for maintaining control.



V.

ANALYSIS OF OPERATIONS

As of August 1, 1954, the following officers are assigned to the third phase of the special operation as follows:

EL CENTRO SECTOR

Line Watch

Calexico	-	69
Yuma	-	61

Road Blocks

Blythe	-	6 (including ranch checking)
Brawley	-	19 (including ranch checking)
Indio	-	14 (including train and ranch checking)
El Centro	-	36 (including ranch checking, transportation and line support)

Total for El Centro Sector - 206

CHULA VISTA SECTOR

Line Watch

Chula Vista-	91 (including bus and train depots at San Diego, jeep and horse patrols east to Ojai Mountains)
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Road Blocks

El Cajon	-	12 (including some line watch between Campo and Tecate)
Aguanga	-	6 (including trail checking)
Oceanside	-	15 (including some ranch checking)
Temecula	-	11

Train Check

Colton	-	21 (including 8 loaned from Los Angeles)
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Total for Chula Vista Sector - 156

Total for both Sectors - 362

Thirty-two Investigators from this District plus 11 Investigators from the New York District are deployed in the Los Angeles area, Ventura, San Luis Obispo,



Bakersfield, San Bernardino, and Santa Ana, for the purpose of checking industry and trades for "wetbacks" and some ranch checking in the areas mentioned. 8 Investigators from the Los Angeles area are presently loaned to Colton and not counted above

Total for the Los Angeles area - 43 (including 11 Investigators from New York)

Total for both Sectors and Los Angeles area - 405

The following shows the status of details into and out of this District:

	<u>Los Angeles</u>	<u>Chula Vista</u>	<u>El Centro</u>	<u>Total</u>
Patrol Inspectors on detail here from other Districts	1	35	87	123
Investigators on detail here from other Districts	11	26	25	<u>62</u>
				185
Los Angeles District Patrol Inspectors detailed to other Districts	0	4	49	53
Los Angeles District Investigators detailed to other Districts	1	0	0	<u>1</u>
				54

The special operation in this District which, in the main, was placed in effect on June 17, 1954, employed no novel plans of operation. Line operations, road blocks, mop-up crews and removal of aliens from the Border were means that have been employed in this District throughout the years consistent with available manpower and equipment. It did, however, involve the detail into the District of a sufficient number of officers to do this work and activated a plan to remove aliens south of the Border. The operation, heralded by a wide publicity program, caused thousands of other "wetbacks" to flee to Mexico and elsewhere to escape apprehension. Apprehensions for the entire State of California on the first day of the second and third phases of the operation, June 17, 1954, were 2158, and they dropped steadily thereafter to 1150 on June 30, 1954. Normal operations had previously netted about 2000 a day The present apprehensions with the reduced special force average about 400 to 500 per day. From June 10 to June 30, 1954, a total of 33,307 "wetbacks" were apprehended, of which 23,222 were "buslifted" to Nogales, Arizona. We were 100% in favor of any plan which would get in control of the "wet-back" situation; we are hopeful that we can now keep abreast of the situation.

How many people did  
H.C. Dist. have prior to  
June 1954?  
State of their race?



However, there must be two considerations in any projected plan based first upon the seriousness of the problem at a particular time and the current availability of manpower and equipment. So long as there is the economic pressure upon Mexican nationals in their country and jobs are available in the United States, it will be necessary to utilize the largest number of men and the greatest amount of equipment that can be made available. These two items will therefore control the adoption of one of the three foregoing plans. We strongly believe that one of the three plans in this memorandum will maintain that objective.

We believe ~~and urge~~ that the Border Patrol operations can most efficiently be carried out through means of a permanent district organization. However, we do strongly urge that in the future a continual study be made of the problems existing in the districts and that assignments of officers and equipment be made by the Central Office accordingly. This may entail the maintenance of a mobile force of as many as 200 officers and necessary equipment for movements among the districts having seasonal problems. I would urge that a board of officers expert in the field of strategy be assigned to make studies of the operations carried out in the various districts with a view to correcting any deficiencies found to be existing.

We feel certain that when the Central Office has analyzed the problems that exist and will lend its efforts to a solution, the field forces can be depended upon to lend its every cooperation.